



BETWEEN THE PAGES

FEBRUARY 2016

QR fun...

Scan this QR code for more HPL news



Story by Peirs Anderson

Some of the most impressive and world changing ideas and inventions can arise from humble beginnings. Something small and almost unimportant at the time can turn into a revolution, and the age of information is overflowing with examples. From multi-billion dollar companies starting from a garage to a website to connect with friends and classmates reaching over a billion users.

QR codes, or Quick Response codes, are exactly that, they began as an auto parts manufacture's invention to keep track of parts and have since become an international tool for easy information display. You may already be familiar with QR codes, or have just seen them around, but they are almost everywhere. From their start in the Toyota-owned Denso Cor-

poration, they have spread to almost every market, even marketing. The identifiable mark of the little square of organized chaos is even becoming more popular in libraries. Huntsville Public Library is going to be hosting a QR focused youth event this March.

Developed in 1994, QR codes have since come to be used to do anything from displaying text to sending images or opening a website and far more. QR is a trademark name for a matrix, or two-dimensional, barcode. A QR code is very much like the familiar Universal Product Code (UPC) barcode found on almost every product, but because it is "2-D", can hold much more information.

But how do they work?

All barcodes work by translating a series of numbers into an image,

such as the thick and thin black lines with white spaces of a UPC. A QR code consists of a white background containing black, square dots arranged in a square grid. At the corner or corners of the grid are position markers that tell the reader how to read the code. This can be read by a camera, scanner, or similar device to compare light and dark areas of the code, along with guide lines in specific areas. The patterns in the image are then translated into the required data from its two-dimensional nature giving the result of the QR code. This means that anything with a camera and the appropriate program can read a QR code.

Like with almost any new information technology, it is sure to lead to newer and greater things.

There are already attempts being made to enhance QR codes to use color to add even more information storage in each image.

So, now that you know a little more about them, whether you are new or a QR code veteran, why not go out and explore this invention that started from a desire to keep track of auto parts, and now brings the world a little closer. Come check us out!

HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

1219 13th Street
Huntsville, TX 77340
936-291-5472

www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com
@HuntsvilleLib—Twitter
HuntsvillePublicLibrary—FB

Monday through Friday
10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday
Noon to 4 p.m.
Closed Sunday

What does STEAM have to do with my library?



Our kick-off event for STEAM at HPL is QR Coding. We will learn the process behind the technology and play games that illustrate what's going on inside a phone when a QR code is scanned. And did you know? Entire books can be accessed for free by scanning a QR code that links users to read.gov. Now EVERYONE with access to a smartphone has access to free books online.

Reference: Mairn, C. & Nebraska Library Commission. (2015, October 17). STEAM @ your library [webinar]. Retrieved from <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/scripts/calendar/eventshow.asp?ProgID=14644>

"Libraries are about discovery; giving people a safe and comfortable place to dream, think, and create is very important because it gives people a chance to explore various technologies and educational opportunities that they can use to enrich their lives. STEAM education refers to teaching and learning, mostly hands-on, in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics."

-Chad Mairn, Nebraska Library Commission



Where's help when I really need it?

**By Richard Lane,
Public Services**

Sometimes while shopping in the big box stores we find ourselves isolated, lost and confused. We look around and no one's there to help. Or worse yet, we seek out two store employees on the other side of the store only to learn that they're newbies and they're also isolated, lost and confused. More often than not we find ourselves walking up and down aisles of merchandise looking for that illusive item only to learn that it's in the far corner of a different department next to the cat litter.

The same can happen as we dig through the complexities of family history. Online databases can overwhelm the family historian. Library catalogs can be a nightmare, particularly if we forget to jot down the location and call number of our finally listed resource.

Here's some advice.

- Buy a book explaining "how to do" family history. Be sure it's current and con-



tains helpful hints for online searching as well as tips on print and microfilm resources. Check online customer reviews before purchasing. Books with lots of reviews and high star counts almost always prove to be good investments.

- Check with the local genealogical society and libraries. They frequently offer how-to-courses, seminars and other genealogy events. Their websites can be a great resource when local histories and city and county records are needed. Many genealogy societies have been collecting family files for decades

and have hundreds of vertical files waiting to be explored.

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Family historians and librarians are almost always "people" people. They like people and want to be liked. A little courtesy and a few kind words will have them falling over themselves as they help you locate the needed book or website.
- Ancestry.com and FamilySearch websites have great learning centers. They offer short courses on a variety of genealogy topics. They are presented by professional genealogist and are almost always free. The U.S. GenWeb offers help for the Genealogy Researcher. Just go to usgenweb.org/research and spend as much or as little time as needed.

The biggest help family historians can give themselves is practice, perseverance and patience.

And by the way, did I mention organization? We'll take a look at organization in April.

fun in and out of the sun

TEEN SOCIAL HOUR

SPRING BREAK is the perfect time for teens to get away from class work for a little while and have some fun. While teenagers may not be able to experience the same kind of spring break vacations as college students, they still have plenty of options. They can spend time with friends or family or both.

Parents should help their teens develop safe but enjoyable spring break plans to make the most of their week off from school. Here are some great ideas for a fun filled week that teens may enjoy. You do not need much money to have fun during Spring Break. Houston has many events going on during the week of Spring Break. Some of the events are have an educational concept, but what's the point of having fun without a little learning involved.

Houston's downtown park, Discovery Green, is always the site of free family fun. Spring break is no different with Discovery STEM:

Spring Break Week on March 16-20, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.. Families can enjoy many free activities. The Houston Livestock and Rodeo is another great place to have fun.

Value Wednesday is the day to save money on rodeo fun. Select seats are just \$10 to the rodeo and concert with Florida Georgia Line on March 18. Check out the livestock show, AGventure, the carnival and shopping at NRG for just \$5 for adults. Kids and seniors are free! Don't miss the \$2 games and \$2 food bites from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Kids' Country Carnival.

Space Center Houston has some fun things during Spring Break, March 14-22. Enjoy Pi Day, Space Scavenger Hunt, Meet the Meteorite Hunters, Curiosity Expo, and a special premiere of Journey to Space March 14. Take a NASA Tram Tour for a behind-the-scenes journey throughout Space Center.

These events are cheap and some are even free, so if you have nothing to do for the week, go and check out some of these FUN MONEY SAVING ACTIVITIES!

- Ashley Newsome, Teen Services Coordinator

Something for everyone

ADULT PROGRAMS

Our motto here at Huntsville Public Library is: "Not just books...something for everyone." That motto has never seemed more true than now, looking at the amazing amount of programs going on for all ages. The adult department is a prime example of this with numerous programs continuing and some just starting this very month. Adult Services Coordinator Mary Kokot has helped arrange a wide array of events, ranging from Tai Chi to the Citizenship Preparation Program to Coloring for Adults program and more.

④ The Walker County Master Gardeners providing helpful tips on how to grow the perfect tomato with their free presentation **"Home Grown Tomatoes"** at 11 a.m. March 1st in the Huntsville Public Library Community Room. With warmer weather approaching, their insightful tips on seeds and seedlings and common solutions are sure to help bring out the best tomatoes this year.

⑤ Our **"Color Away the Winter Blahs!"** program has been so popular that it has been extended through March. Stress management and improved overall wellness are just some of the benefits of this fun activity, and we're happy to continue supplying the colored pencils, adult coloring books and coffee every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. Come give it a try, no registration is necessary and the program is open to adults 18 and older.

⑥ There are many tests in life, and few so daunting as the U.S. Naturalization Test, but from March 28th to April 25th, Huntsville Public Library

and Sam Houston State University's Center for Law, Engagement, and Politics (LEAP) will be presenting a free **Citizenship Preparation Course**. Mike Yawn, Political Science Professor at SHSU, will be teaching and all necessary materials will be provided and will cover the application process, oral interview and citizenship exam. Bilingual support provided. Space is limited and registration is required.

⑦ In collaboration with Sam Houston State University's Student Money Management Center, three seminars will be hosted in the Library's Community Room focusing on **Financial Literacy**. On April 6th, the Student Money Management Center will be presenting "Budgeting and Goal Setting" followed on the 21st by Center Director Patsy Collins discussing "Cutting Expenses" which will focus on creative methods to reduce family expenses. On April 28th, "How to Pay for College" will be delivered, providing potential guidance to those interested in furthering their education and staying on budget.

⑧ **Tai Chi** is a Chinese martial art that has been shown to improve health in many ways, including reducing anxiety and chronic pain conditions and strengthening breathing and cardiovascular health, along with numerous other health benefits. That is why we are proud to host Gary Readore, experienced instructor of the Yang style long form who will be instructing classes each Wednesday from April 13th through May 18th starting at 5 p.m. in the Community Room. Readore

has over 20 years experience in Tai Chi, and gained his instructor rank from Jeff Bolt, another renowned Tai Chi instructor. Come improve your balance, burn some calories and feel the tranquility. Class size is limited and registration is required.

⑨ Mary Anne Burkhalter will be returning to Huntsville Public Library's Community Room again this year at 10:30 a.m. Monday, April 18th, presenting her **"Remember When... Texas Trail Ride,"** a themed show centered around the history of Texas, Sam Houston, Texas Rangers, Buddy Holly and more. Songs, tales and cheer are Burkhalter's calling card and are sure leave us enriched and laughing. In February of

2015, Burkhalter performed her **"Tribute to Mae West"** to a packed

Huntsville Public Library Community room, becoming one of the largest events held there.

You can also visit Burkhalter's website www.characterstogo.com for more information and links to her past work.

For more information and to sign up for current and future activities, contact Mary Kokot, Adult Services Coordinator, at [\(936\) 291-5471](tel:936-291-5471).



Mobile World Congress

Mobile World Congress is an electronics event held annually in Barcelona, Spain. Mobile World Congress is a little lesser known relative to the big shows in the United States like E3 and the Consumer Electronics Show. As the event's name suggests, this electronics show showcases mobile products which includes laptops, smartphones, and tablets. Bigger companies like Microsoft, Google, and Apple like to have their own press events for introducing their own products and most of the time, choose not to exhibit at the Mobile World Congress. Companies that make devices but rely on software companies like Google and Microsoft to run their devices are what Mobile World Congress is geared toward. Lenovo,

Hewlett Packard, VAIO, and Panasonic are just a few companies showing off their new products this year at the show. The event also markets as a way for leaders of big companies to network with the tech companies to find hardware solutions that fit their company's needs. Mobile World Congress is a great place to look for new hardware releases for the upcoming year. Is Mobile World Congress an event you will start to look out for? Let us know on Twitter or Facebook!



- **Drew Nevlud**
Library IT Specialist

MINECRAFT MANIA!

Minecraft! Kids these days are obsessed with it. Described online as “an independent game with the most basic of graphics, there’s no storyline and you won’t see it advertised on TV,” Minecraft is played relentlessly all over the world. Nathan Adams, developer for Mojang (the company which published Minecraft) tweeted that “nearly 1 million people were playing Minecraft at the exact same time across all platforms on Jan 9, 2015. It was also reported that this was not a peak time [for playing], so that number will probably double or triple.”



So what is it exactly and why is it so popular? The game has been described as a “first-person sandbox game” or that “people create their own experience.” In simpler terms, players dig holes to make blocks. You can build whatever you want with these blocks from a simple clay hut to an elaborate Taj Mahal-ian masterpiece.

But it’s more than just a design game! Monsters, zombies, and ghouls show up from time to time and players must either go on the offensive by building some sort of weapon to survive or hunker down in a defensive shelter.

Children and adults alike are mesmerized by the game with many parents reporting that if their kids aren’t playing it, then they are talking about it or watching videos of other people playing it.

Part of the appeal is that there are endless opportunities in the game and zero rules. You can play on a wide variety of platforms such as a smartphone, computer, tablet, X Box, or PlayStation. You can recreate something you know like your childhood neighborhood, build something from history, or cre-



ate an entire new universe from scratch. Or, if you are tired of building, you can fight monsters. You even have the option of playing along or with friends.

One of the major appeals of the game is that it can be played at almost any skill level. In most popular games, you need a particular level of skill to move on to the next level, which can be a deterrent to young children who don’t have the coordination or time to make real game progress. In Minecraft, children can still have fun at any level of play.



If your child loves Minecraft, be sure to have him or her check out the library’s collection of Minecraft books. We have a wonderful selection of titles both in print and as E-books in our Overdrive collection.

*- Rachel McPhail,
Children’s Librarian*

Check out the exciting
Children’s Programs at the
Huntsville Public Library!



- ☐ Mother Goose lapsits, 10:30 Mondays
- ☐ Storytime, 10:45 on Wednesdays AND Fridays
- ☐ Family Movie Night, 5:30, 2nd Friday of the Month
- ☐ Wii Friday, 4-6 except on Family Movie Night
- ☐ Lego Club, 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month, 5
- ☐ Read with the Dogs, 3rd Monday of the month, 4

Spring Break Activities:

Elementary Craft, 3 p.m., March 7th, 8th, 9th (M, T, W)

Teddy Bear Tea, 11:15 a.m., March 7th (M)

Spring STEAM, 4:30 p.m., March 9th (W)

Wild Things ZooFari, 2 p.m., March 10th (Th)

Jedi Academy, 1 to 3 p.m. March 11th (F), Registration Required

For more information, please contact Children’s Coordinator
Rachel McPhail, at 936-291-5910.